

Message Text

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PAGE 01 OTTAWA 02315 231953Z

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ACTION EB-11

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TAGS: ETRN, CA

SUBJECT: CIVAIR: NORTH ATLANTIC TRAFFIC FROM CANADA

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF ARTICLE FROM JULY 23 TORONTO
GLOBE AND MAIL IN WHICH AVIATION REPORTER KEN ROMAIN
DESCRIBES GROWTH IN CANADIAN NORTH ATLANTIC TRAFFIC
THIS SEASON IN SPITE OF INCREASED AIR FARES:

BEGIN TEXT. DESPITE AIR FARE INCREASES, AIR CANADA
REPORTS THAT ITS NORTH ATLANTIC TRAVEL THIS SUMMER
IS RUNNING 13.3 PER CENT AHEAD OF LAST YEAR, WHILE
TRAFFIC FOR THE YEAR IS UP 4.6 PER CENT.

"THIS IS NOT AS HIGH AS IN PAST YEARS BUT IT IS PRETTY
GOOD, COMPARED TO THE UNITED STATES," PAUL CASEY, AIR
CANADA SPOKESMAN, SAID.

"OUR INTERNATIONAL TRAFFIC IS GOING AT A BETTER RATE
THAN THAT OF U.S. AIRLINES, WHOSE INTERNATIONAL
TRAFFIC ON THE NORTH ATLANTIC IS DOWN FROM LAST
YEAR."

CP AIR SAID ITS FIGURES FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAFFIC
WERE NOT AVAILABLE AND "WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE UNTIL
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PAGE 02 OTTAWA 02315 231953Z

THE END OF THE MONTH."

BRITISH AIRWAYS, WHICH WAS FORECASTING A10 PER CENT GROWTH THIS YEAR, IS AVERAGING ABOUT 5 PER CENT, ACCORDING TO SPOKESMAN JOHN DAWE.

"THIS IS NOT TOO BAD CONSIDERING THE ECONOMIC CLIMATE IN EUROPE, FARES, INFLATION, YOU NAME IT. WE ARE GOING PRETTY DARN GOOD CONSIDERING THE PROSPECTS," HE SAID.

THE AIRLINE CUT BACK ON SOME FREQUENCIES, REPLACING BOEING 707 AIRCRAFT WITH THE LARGE JUMBO BOEING 747, AND IS OFFERING MORE SEATS.

"WE ARE EXPERIENCING A PHENOMENAL INCREASE IN TRAVEL TO SCOTLAND FROM CANADA THIS YEAR. WE ARE CHOCK-A-BLOCK EVERY NIGHT," HE SAID.

"IT SEEMS TO GO IN A CYCLE, YOU CAN ALMOST COUNT ON IT TO SHOW UP EVERY TWO OR THREE YEARS. IT APPEARS THAT ONE YEAR SON OR DAUGHTER RETURNS HOME TO SEE MOM, THE NEXT YEAR MOM COMES TO SEE SON," HE SAID. THIS APPARENTLY IS THE YEAR OF THE SON SEEING MOM. AIRLINES DESCRIBED THIS TYPE OF TRAVEL AS VFR TRAFFIC, VISIT FRIENDS AND RELATIVES. EVERY YEAR IT MAKES UP A LARGE PORTION OF OVERSEAS TRAVEL BECAUSE OF THE LARGE ETHNIC MARKET CREATED BY IMMIGRANTS IN PAST YEARS WHO RETURN HOME FOR VISITS.

ALITALIA, WHICH BEGAN OPERATING FROM TORONTO LAST YEAR, IS ONE AIRLINE THAT BENEFITS FROM VFR TRAFFIC. PASSENGER TRAFFIC IN JULY IS 25 PER CENT AHEAD OF LAST YEAR, ALITALIA SPOKESMAN MARIA BERGAMIN SAID. "TO THE END OF JUNE OUR TRAFFIC WAS UP 12 PER CENT, AND FOR THE YEAR WE EXPECT TO BE UP 14 TO 15 PER CENT OVER LAST YEAR."

ALITALIA BEGAN OPERATING A DAILY 474 FLIGHT ON JUNE 16 AND BECAUSE OF THE HEAVY INCREASE IN TRAFFIC WILL HAVE PLACED EIGHT EXTRA SECTIONS BETWEEN THE UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 OTTAWA 02315 231953Z

PERIOD JUNE 25 AND JULY 30, MISS BERGAMIN SAID. EIGHT OF THESE EXTRA SECTIONS WILL BE BOEING 747S AND ONE A MCDONNELL DOUGLAS DC-8. "WE SEEM TO BE THE EXCEPTION THIS YEAR," SHE SAID. "THE OTHER AIRLINES SEEM MORE DEPENDENT ON TOURIST TRAFFIC, WHILE MUCH OF OURS IS VFR AND BUSINESS TRAFFIC."

LUFTHANSA, THE WESTER GERMAN AIRLINE, AND KLM, THE DUTCH AIRLINE, REPORT SATISFACOTRY TRAFFIC GROWTH. LUFTHANSA'S TORONTO OPERATIONS STARTED LAST YEAR, WHILE KLM'S BEGAN THIS YEAR.

"TRAFFIC HS BEEN EXCELLENT," SAID INA GILCHRIST OF LUFTHANSA. A KLM SPOKESMAN SAID THAT TTRAFFIC IN THE AIRLINE'S EARLY PERIOD OF OPERATIONS FROM TORONTO HAS BEEN MOST GRATIFYING.

AIR FRANCE ALSO REPORTED TRAFFIC INCREASES IN ITS OPERATIONS FROM MONTREAL. THE AIRLINE HAS INTRODUCED A MONRING FLIGHT THAT ARRIVES IN PARIS ABOUT 8 P.M., WHICH IS PROVING TO BE VERY POPULAR WITH HOLIDAY TRAVELLERS "AS IT GIVES THEM A NIGHT IN PARIS ON THE DAY THEY ARRIVE AND IT IS STILL ONLY 3 P.M. MONTREAL TIME," A SPOKESMAN SAID. END TEXT.

2. COMMENT: THIS REPORT IS CONSISTENT WITH BUOYANT CHARACTER OF CANADIAN ECONOMY AT PRESENT TIME, RELATIVELY LOW UNEMPLOYMENT (ESPECIALLY IN CENTRAL AND WESTERN CANADA), PLUS STRENGTH OF CANADIAN DOLLAR IN COMPARISON WITH US DOLLAR.
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